DOCUMENT RESUME

ED [illegible]0 483 SO 014 877

AUTHOR Smith, Roland E.
TITLE Research Productivity in Graduate Departments of Political Science in the South and Southwest.
PUB DATE Mar 83
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association (Houston, TX, March, 1983).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Faculty; Doctoral Programs; Geographic Regions; Higher Education; Masters Programs; *Political Science; *Productivity; *Researchers; Social Science Research
IDENTIFIERS *United States (South); *United States (Southwest)

ABSTRACT

An analysis of journal publications by members of political science departments in 38 universities in the southern and southwestern United States reveals relatively low research productivity for most institutions. The 2-year study (1980-1981) involved an examination of over 20 journals cited in the Social Science Citation Index. All graduate degree granting departments in the Southwest were included; for the South, only departments offering the Ph.D. were considered. The mean production for all members of a department is one article every 4 years. Further, a very small group of department members in each institution actually publishes, while others contribute little or nothing. The conclusion is that the productivity of a department depends on its recruitment practices and retention capabilities. Productivity declines when a productive scholar is replaced by an individual just out of graduate school. Those departments which have grown in productivity have done so because they recruited scholars who have demonstrated a capacity for regular production. (Author/KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED230483

RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY IN GRADUATE DEPARTMENTS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE IN THE SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Roland E. Smith
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Roland E. Smith
Department of Political Science
Texas Tech University

So 014 877

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association at Houston, Texas, March, 1983

Research Productivity in Graduate Departments
of Political Science in the South and Southwest

The recent publication of an assessment of the graduate programs of a number of disciplines in American universities in several issues of "The Chronicle of Higher Education" (1982, 1983) stimulated both interest and controversy among academicians. This "rating game" is regularly played by political scientists for their discipline, with the most recent of such efforts being published as recently as 1982. (McCormick and Bernick, 1982) Earlier rating efforts were produced by Somit and Tannenhaus (1964), Canter (1966), Morgan and Fitzgerald (1977), Scully (1979), and Robey (1979).*

In these several accounts we find the use of two methodologies which have produced two sets of results. The "reputational" approach evaluates a program in terms of other faculty members' perceptions of both the stature of the faculty in a program and the graduates it produces. The "productivity" approach, on the other hand, attempts an assessment based on the amount of scholarly work published during a given period of time by the faculty of each department. This is usually accomplished by counting publications in some of the journals in the discipline -- typically the American Political Science Review and the five

---

*These sources are all cited in McCormick and Bernick. (1982, 212)

regional journals: Polity, The American Journal of Political Science, The Western Political Quarterly, The Journal of Politics, and Social Science Quarterly.

While each of these approaches has its limitations, the productivity approach ordinarily neglects to consider the vast amount of work by reputable scholars which appears in specialized publications of which the following are illustrative: American Behavioral Scientist, American Politics Quarterly, African Studies Review, Comparative Political Studies, International Organization, International Studies Quarterly, Journal of Modern African Studies, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Jurimetrics Journal, Law and Society Review, Policy Studies Journal, Political Behavior, Political Methodology, Public Administration Review, Public Opinion Quarterly, and World Politics.

Our purpose here is to examine and compare the productivity of the Political Science Departments with graduate programs in the South and Southwest by including a number of these additional journals, which we can accomplish in by use of the Social Science Citation Index (1980, 1981). While its coverage of periodicals is quite extensive, it does neglect some of the specialized scientific journals in the social sciences while including a few of the "popular" ones such as Psychology Today.

Our analysis makes use of a two-year period (1980-1981) in order to provide reasonable representation of faculty research, recognizing that a longer period of time would be

optimal. All graduate degree granting departments in the Southwest are examined, but for the South, we consider only those departments which grant the Ph.D. in political science. The publication rate for the period is determined by dividing each department's total production of articles listed in the SSCI (including notes and comments of any substance) by the number of faculty positions filled in both years combined. Thus a department with 24 positions filled in one year and 23 in the other year would produce a denominator of 47 to be used in the calculation. We then have obtained an index which represents the number of articles per faculty position per year for each department. Table 1 presents this information, as well as the rank order for each department offering graduate degrees in the Southwest. It may be noted that several of the departments which DO NOT offer doctorates were outproducing several of those which do.

The range of productivity is fairly broad but one is led to question why there are so few research efforts being published by the members of some of these departments. A score of .250, for instance, means that the average production for ALL members of a department is one article every four years! Of course faculty members receive benefits for other sorts of activity, such as the authorship of book reviews (and some departments seem to specialize in this), but it seems that a graduate department of any size should be producing more published research. Furthermore, what the averages in either table fail to demonstrate is that nearly every

Table 1. Graduate Departments of Political Science in the Southwest Ranked by the Average Number of Journal Authorships Per Scientist Person Year, 1980-1981.

Rank	University	Average
1	New Orleans	.581
2	Houston	.500
3	Tulane	.438
4	Rice	.450
5	Arizona	.418
6	*Texas A & M	.416
7	Arizona State	.328
8	New Mexico	.303
9	*Texas Christian	.294
10	Louisiana State	.269
11	Oklahoma	.259
12	North Texas State	.196
13	Texas Tech	.178
14	*Texas - El Paso	.176
15	Texas - Austin	.162
16	*Houston - Clear Lake	.156
17	*Oklahoma State	.143
17	*Southwest Texas State	.143
18	Dallas	.125
19	Northern Arizona	.095

20	*Stephen F. Austin	.091
21	*Texas Woman's	.083
22	*Southern Methodist	.071
23	*Lamar	.059
24.5	*Angelo State	.055
24.5	East Texas State	.055
26	*New Mexico State	.053
27	*Texas - Arlington	.032
32.5	*Baylor	.000
32.5	*Midwestern	.000
32.5	*Sam Houston State	.000
32.5	*Southwestern Univ. & A & M	.000
32.5	*Southwestern Louisiana	.000
32.5	*St. Mary's	.000
32.5	*Sull Ross State	.000
32.5	*Tarelton State	.000
32.5	*Texas A & I	.000
32.5	*West Texas State	.000

MEAN = .161 (for Ph.D. departments only, Mean = .290) * NCTE: Master's programs only.

Table 2. Graduate Departments of Political Science in the South Ranked by the Average Number of Journal Authorships Per Scientist Person Year, 1980-1981.

Rank	University	Average
1	Kentucky	.971
2	New Orleans	.581
3	Georgia	.540
4	Houston	.500
5	Rice	.450
6	Tulane	.438
7	Florida State	.339
8	Georgia State	.300
9	Virginia	.294
10	Florida	.288
11	Louisiana State	.269
12	Duke	.265
13	Tennessee	.262
14	Oklahoma	.259
15	Emory	.240
16	North Carolina	.230
17	South Carolina	.212
18	Mississippi	.200
19	Vanderbilt	.200
20	North Texas State	.196

21	Texas Tech	.178
22	Southern Mississippi	.167
23	Texas - Austin	.162
24	Alabama	.125
25	Dallas	.125
26	West Virginia	.085
27	Atlanta	.067
28	East Texas State	.055

MEAN = .283

department tends to have its score determined by a very small group of its members while several others contribute little or nothing. This research methodology does neglect to count the authorship of books and in a few cases the result is that we miss some significant contributions to knowledge. However, in many cases authors of books reporting on major research efforts have also produced journal articles on certain aspects of that same effort.

Ideally, it would be fruitful to expand this effort to include all of the graduate departments in the country, but that will have to wait until a later time. We can, however, compare these results with some of the data presented by McCormick and Berrick (1982, 224) in Table 3 of their report. Nine of the twenty states listed as the top producers, according to the then-current affiliation of the authors (for 1974-1978), are southern and southwestern institutions. We can see in Table 3 (below) that there have been few changes of

importance in the productivity of those departments. Virginia and Texas Tech are two institutions which seem to have declined the most in productivity. The decline in productivity at Texas Tech is primarily the result of the departure of some of its most prolific authors without the addition of anyone of sufficient stature to make up for the loss. This suggests that the productivity of a department

Table 3. Productivity in Nine Southern Institutions Listed in the McCormick and Bernick Study Compared with the Results of the Current Analysis.

Institution	Rank 1974-1978	Rank Table 2
Kentucky	3	1
Virginia	5	9
Houston	8	4
Florida	11	10
Texas Tech	16	21
Duke	17	12
Rice	18	5
Tulane	19	6
Arizona	20	7 *

* NOTE: Arizona's score would place it 7th if included among the states in Table 2.

depends as much upon its recruitment practices and retention capabilities as or anything else. To replace one of the most productive scholars in the nation with an "ABD" fresh out of graduate school is to guarantee a decline in the productivity of the department, at least for the near term. On the other hand, those departments which have grown in stature (productivity) in recent years have done so largely because they recruited several scholars who had already demonstrated a capacity for for regular production. In the cases of Rice, Tulane, and Arizona, one suspects that the disparity between their rankings in these two studies is because of some systematic factor such as the particular journals being used in the two analyses since all three retain their proximity and positions relative to each other. As was pointed out earlier, the McCormick and Bernick study used only five journals, so the conclusion we must draw is that several members in all three of these departments publish regularly in the more specialized journals. Alternate explanations would be either that there was a 'surge' in productivity by these departments in 1980-81, or, perhaps, that there had been some vigorous recruitment of productive faculty members in all three institutions--which seems hardly likely. However, one is struck by the relative similarity of rankings of the institutions listed in Table 3, which suggests that there is a certain amount of validity in the method used for this study and that it produces a better measure for some institutions.

In conclusion, we have to note the relatively low average number of articles produced by the faculty in most Political Science departments in the South and Southwest. The means for the productivity averages for both the Southwest and the South are very similar, suggesting that the apparent low level of productivity is characteristic of both regions.

References

"The Chronicle for Higher Education" (Sept. 29, 1982), pp. 9-10.

"The Chronicle for Higher Education" (Nov. 10, 1982), pp. 5-6.

"The Chronicle for Higher Education" (Dec. 1, 1982), pp. 8,10.

"The Chronicle for Higher Education" (Jan. 12, 1983), pp. 14-16.

"The Chronicle for Higher Education" (Jan. 19, 1983), pp. 12-14.

McCormick, James M. and E. Lee Remick. (1982) "Graduate Training and Productivity: A Look at Who Publishes," The Journal of Politics 44 (February, 1982), 212-227.

Social Science Citation Index (1980) Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, 1981.

Social Science Citation Index (1981) Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, 1982.